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A  
S E R M O N

OCCASIONED BY THE  
D E A T H

O F  
Mrs. S A R A H E V A N S,

WIFE OF  
The Rev. C A L E B E V A N S,

O F  
B R I S T O L,

Who died *November 7, 1771*, in the 33d Year  
of her Age.

WITH THE  
O R A T I O N

Delivered at her Interment.

By *J. Ash* A S H. K

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B R I S T O L:  
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ISAIAH xxvi. 3.

THOU WILT KEEP HIM IN PERFECT PEACE WHOSE  
MIND IS STAYED ON THEE.

SOME there are in the Christian world, who represent even faith in God their Savior, as a useless thing in religion; nay, reject it as the offspring of a heated imagination, and resolve the whole of that religion, which they call rational, into a dry and insipid morality. But, my dear friends, if there be any truth at all in the words of my text, faith is not a spurious offspring, not the phantom of a heated imagination, but an important and precious reality.——Here it stands connected with one of the greatest of all blessings; with that peace of mind, which is worth more than all the possessions of this world; with the peace of God which passeth all understanding, and is the only thing that can make us truly happy.

Let faith then be restored to its proper place and dignity in the religious life. Let not the humble Christian reject the needed and friendly aid of this precious principle. Let not the humble Christian cast away his confidence in God his Savior, for it hath great recompence of reward. No, no, the humble sincere Christian cannot think of doing it: no, he has found it

to be his great and his only support in time of trial, distress and conflict: it is more precious to him than gold tried in the fire, and therefore he would not part with it for a whole world. Here is the foundation of hope: here is the assurance of peace. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.*

"Yes," as though the prophet had said, "I have no doubt at all in this matter. Thou, the Lord Jehovah, with whom there is everlasting strength, I know that thou art able, I am confident that thou *wilt* keep him, whoever he be, in peace, in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed, wholly stayed, on thee the God of his salvation. This is what I dare assert, I know it, I have had joyful experience of it; and I thus appeal to all the people of God, to all who have made the experiment, yea, I thus appeal to God himself for the truth of it. Thou hast done it, and thou wilt still do it, for thou art the same yesterday, to-day and for ever; the hope, the help, the refuge of thy people in all their times of difficulty and distress." Yes, my dear Christian friends, this is an important, a certain, an invariable truth, and you may take the comfort of it.

In the prosecution of this subject, the following things, as more especially implied in the text, will offer themselves to our consideration.

I. The blessing, the great and desirable blessing here spoken of. *Peace, perfect peace.*

II. The author and preserver of this great blessing. The Lord Jehovah. *THOU wilt keep, &c.*

III. The



III. The description or character of the happy man who is possessed of this blessing. *He whose mind is stayed on God.*

IV. The certainty of this great truth, the blessed assurance we have of it in my text. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.*

I. Then we are to consider the blessing, the great and desirable blessing here spoken of, and that is, *perfect peace.*

*Peace!* Methinks there is something highly pleasing, something divinely soothing in the word itself. How grateful is peace! *Outward* peace, peace as it stands opposed to strife, contention, tumult and war,—peace in families, amongst friends and neighbors, in the world and in the church of God, when it can be preserved with a good conscience, how much to be desired! *Inward* peace, peace of *mind*, that peace and composure which a man enjoys within himself, and which may subsist while all without him is tumult and disorder,—is yet more desirable. When the world is all in an uproar, when tumult, confusion and discord rage on every side of us, *then* to be serene and calm, O how great a blessing! But, great as this blessing is, it falls short, vastly short of what is intended in my text. The peace in my text, the peace I am to speak of this day, is a *religious peace*. Peace in the conscience. Peace betwixt God and the soul. Peace, arising from a view of interest in the love and favor of God, which is life, nay better than life itself, to every soul that enjoys it. Peace, arising from a good hope of pardoned sin and acceptance with God. Sin is  
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the cause, nay, the sum of all evil, and whilst the power of it prevails, or the guilt of it remains there can be no *true peace* in the soul; no, all is tempest, confusion and disorder. But God says, \* *I, even I am he, that blotteih out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Come and let us reason together, though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool* †. This lays the storm, calms the tempest of the mind, and gives peace indeed.—Peace, grounded on the hope of interest in the great Redeemer, and in that great redemption which he purchased at the expence of his blood:—Peace, arising from the prospect of *complete* deliverance from sin, from death, from hell; in a word, from the prospect of the *GLORY that shall follow*.—And O, how great the power and efficacy of this peace, to silence all our fears, doubts and discouragements; to reconcile us to the whole will of God; and to raise us above the vanities of this life and world!

*It is perfect peace, that is, true peace.* It hath its foundation in truth; every thing else is spurious and counterfeit, every thing else is imposture and delusion to the soul. The wicked cry, Peace! Peace! But there is no peace: What have they to do with peace? They are like the troubled sea, which continually casteth up mire and dirt. The peace of the wicked is a *false* peace, worse on many accounts than open war; but the peace my text speaks of is *true* peace, it hath its foundation in truth itself, and can never deceive us.

*It is the best peace.* No other peace will bear a comparison. The best, the most perfect peace that can be enjoyed in this life.—*And it is tending to absolute perfection*

\* Isaiah xliii. 25,      † Isaiah i. 18.



*perfection in the world to come; tending to all the light and life and glory and blessedness of God's immediate presence.*

Come then thou welcome guest! Thou soother of the troubled mind, come, unworthy as I am, come take up thy dwelling in this breast of mine, and I shall be truly happy!

II. We proceed in the second place to consider whence this blessing comes, or who is the author and preserver of it.

Have we this peace, this perfect peace in and of ourselves? No. Can the world, or all that is in the world, give it to us? No. If ever we have it, it must come from God.

*It is from God, my friends, the God of peace: from the great Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, nor so much as the shadow of turning; from God himself, who is the source of all being and blessedness, from whom every good and perfect gift cometh.—It is from Christ, the Prince of peace: who laid down his life and shed his most precious blood to procure it for us. Yes, He is our peace: his blood speaketh peace, and, when applied to our consciences, it brings peace into our souls.—It is from the Spirit of God: whose office it is to take the things of Christ and shew them unto us, and to witness with our spirits that we are the sons of God; and it is this application and witness that confirms this peace and gives us all the comfort of it.*

Moreover this peace, this blessed peace! is *promoted* and *kept up* in our souls, in a course of intimate communion and fellowship with God. In attending to the great duties of religion in the family, in the closet, and in the house of God. In repeated exercises of  
faith

faith. And by the continued application of the peace-speaking blood and righteousness of the great Redeemer.

And thus, my friends, the eternal God himself, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are all employed in this great work. And, you may depend upon it, none but God himself could ever work it in us. It is HIS prerogative to speak peace. The blessing which was pronounced by the priest on the people under the legal dispensation, was summed up in these remarkable words.

—\* *The LORD bless thee and keep thee.—The LORD make his face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee. The LORD lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and give thee PEACE.*—And under the gospel dispensation the great blessing promised is, † *The PEACE of God which passeth all understanding.* And, to confirm all, our blessed Lord himself said to his disciples, and in them to all that should believe on his name through their word, ‡ *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*

III. This bring us to consider the description or character of the happy man that is possessed of this great blessing. My text says, it is *He whose mind is stayed on God. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.* Now this character implies at least two things, viz. A *steady confidence in God*, and a *supreme affection to him*; for where the mind is stayed on God, it must cleave to him in faith and love.

1st. It implies a steady confidence in God. The mind, when once enlightened by the Spirit of God, cannot

\* Numb. vi. 24, 25, 26.

† Phil. iv. 7.

‡ John xiv. 27.



cannot but perceive its own wretchedness and weakness, as a fallen sinful creature; nay, must feel it, and be fully convinced that there is no hope nor help for it but in God. The mind, beaten off from all dependance in itself, goes forth after God, goes out to God and makes application for help, where it can only be found; and, though deeply sensible of its guilt and unworthiness, yet encouraged by the word and promise of God, by the righteousness and blood, by the compassion and grace of a dying Savior, rejoices in hope of eternal life, fixes on the foundation which God hath laid, fixes on God himself as its all-sufficient refuge and portion, and cannot live without him. No, here the mind finds solid ground, and here it is determined to fix itself. And thus, perhaps, after long perplexity and doubt, after great uncertainty and distress, it is brought to its proper center, and here will it rest for ever.

adly. But further, as the character in the text implies a steady confidence in God, so likewise a supreme affection to him. The mind, in great distress and perplexity, and it may be after many fruitless researches, is obliged at last to fix upon God for there is no other; it sees there is no other refuge. But does it fix upon God at last, with any dislike, with any degree of reluctance? No, far from it; here the mind fixes, when it does fix, with entire approbation and complacency. O yes, faith receives the object of its confidence with the highest satisfaction and pleasure. 'Tis but for faith to discover the object, and the mind receives it, cannot but receive it, as most suitable and most precious. \* *Unto you that believe, says the apostle, he is precious.* O yes, supremely precious, preciousness itself. When once the mind is stayed on God, stayed on Christ, there it fixes with

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cordial

\* 1 Pet. ii. 7.

cordial and superlative affection. And where can the mind fix itself, where can it be stayed but on God? Where can it find an adequate portion but in him? May it not challenge the whole world to give it satisfaction? Are there any solid grounds of hope, comfort or happiness but in God? No, there cannot be; the body, the vile body, may be pleased pampered and gratified in the enjoyment of sensible objects; but what becomes of the mind? The *body* is pleased and pampered, but the *mind* is starved, impoverished and ruined.

Thus the mind is stayed on God, in *steady confidence* and *supreme affection*. And, I may add, as far as this steady confidence, and this supreme affection prevail, so far there is peace within. O yes, shew me the man whose mind is thus stayed on God, and you shew me the man that has peace in his soul, you shew me the man who is truly happy. And this brings us,

IV. To consider the certainty of this great truth, the blessed assurance we have of it in my text. *Thou wilt, I am sure of it, as though the prophet had said, Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.* Yes, my friends, it is an important, a comfortable and a certain truth. And should you ask from whence this confidence might arise. I answer,—1st. from the nature and reason of the thing itself. Can the mind of a good man have peace and not be stayed on God? As well may the ancient mountains, the everlasting hills stand without a foundation. And, on the other hand, can the mind be stayed on God and yet not have peace? As well may the sun shine in all its meridian lustre without light in the firmament of heaven. These things God hath joined together, and it is impossible that they should  
ever



ever be separated from each other.—(2dly.) The prophet might have this confidence, not only from the nature and reason of the thing itself, but likewise from the word of God, nay from the spirit of inspiration which he had from God. \* *Great peace have they that love thy law and nothing shall offend them. Cast thy burden on the Lord and he will sustain thee. Commit thy way to the Lord, and he will give thee the desire of thy heart, trust also in him and he will bring it to pass. They that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Sion, that cannot be moved, but abideth for ever.* These, and many other declarations to this purpose, were found on sacred record long before our prophet was born; and here he was directed by the Spirit of God to add, the yet more express declaration in the words of my text. And surely the word of God is a sufficient foundation for confidence in all ages of the world. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the word of the Lord abideth for ever.—Once more (3dly.) The prophet might have this confidence, not only from the nature and reason of the thing itself, not only from the word of God, and the spirit of revelation which he had from God, but what was still more with respect to himself, he had it, no doubt, from his own experience. The prophet had his trials and exercises as well as other men, he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, but he was a good man, his mind was stayed on God and he had peace in his soul; yea he could say, *I will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song, he also is become my salvation* †. He had therefore testimony to this great truth in his own breast, nor could he doubt of it without offering violence to reason, scripture, and the feelings of his own mind. And this truth has been confirmed in the experience of good

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people

\* Psalms cxix. 65.—lv. 22.—xxxvii. 5.—cxxxv. 1.

† Isaiah xii. 2.

people in all ages of the world. Nay, may I not venture to say, there is a witness to it in the heart-felt experience of every good man on the face of the earth; and, I hope, in that of many, very many, that hear me this day. I am not talking to you my friends of some strange thing, some point of abstruse speculation, but of that which enters into the life, the feelings, the heart and soul of every real Christian, in the whole world. Here then is the foundation of hope; here is the assurance of peace. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.*

This reviving truth, I am commissioned to tell you, was eminently exemplified in the experience of our dear deceased friend. It afforded her great support, not only when under her first religious impressions, but frequently afterwards; and was eminently blessed to her in her last illness.

Mrs. Evans, the friend whose loss we this day deplore, was the only daughter of the Rev. Mr. Joseph Jeffries, of Taunton in Somersetshire. She was left an orphan when a child, but her education was, nevertheless, truly pious: and, through that distinguishing grace which she was ever ready to admire and adore, she became truly religious in early youth. She was baptized and admitted to Christian fellowship in the church of Christ at Pershore in Worcester-shire, about the middle of the year 1760. And, blessed be God, she was enabled to maintain and adorn the Christian character and profession to the end of life.

In the spring of the year 1762, she became the amiable and pious consort of your present minister, whose heart is now so deeply affected with his loss.—His loss, and that of her children, friends and fellow Christians, is indeed great!



great! But we have joyful confidence, that this loss, great as it appears to us, is not worthy to be mentioned with her gain.

To draw the character of our amiable friend on this occasion, would be to violate the will of the dead. Her modest request was, "Let nothing be said of me. Only  
"I leave this as my testimony for the honor of God and  
"religion, and for the encouragement of my friends and  
"fellow Christians. God has been very good to me in  
"this affliction; Jesus Christ more precious to me than  
"ever; and, I hope I can say, I love God *for* afflicting  
"me."

This happy frame of mind she preserved to the very last: but often regretted that the shortness of her breath would not permit her to speak *more* of her beloved Redeemer and Savior: and yet, blessed be God, she *was* enabled to speak much of him, and to express, very fully, the consolation and hope she found in him.

It will doubtless be pleasing to many of you, my friends, to hear some of those pious expressions that dropped from her dying lips. I will give them to you; and God grant they may be blessed to every soul of us.

Not long before her death, she said to her dearest friend; "I cannot boast of those extraordinary elevations which some have experienced, but I have inward  
"peace, and the enemy is kept from disturbing me.—I  
"am calm and resigned; glory, glory be to God for it.  
"He keepeth me, 'tis HE keeps me in perfect peace."  
At another time, "My flesh and my heart do indeed  
"now faint and fail, but God is the strength of my heart,  
"and I hope will be my portion for ever." And again, when the fever was strong upon her, and her breath was  
much

much oppressed,—with a smile on her countenance, she said, “What is all this if glory is to follow?” And on the other hand, “What a sad thing it would be now, in my circumstances, to be a stranger to Christ, and the way of salvation!” But so far was this from being her case, that she knew in whom she had believed, and frequently expressed a longing desire to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, that she might be ever with the Lord. She had much pleasure in her contemplations on these words, \* *Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior the LORD JESUS CHRIST; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things to himself:*—And said, with remarkable joy, when they were repeated to her, “O yes, and I long to be subdued.” At another time, she said, “I hope Christ is more and more precious to me. He is my wisdom, my righteousness, my sanctification, and, I trust, *will be* my complete redemption.” And then, after a short pause, she repeated the following lines;

O death, frail nature's dreaded foe!  
Thy frown with terror fills my heart;  
How shall I bear the fatal blow,  
Which must my soul and body part?

Jesus my Savior, and my God,  
To Thee my trembling spirit flies;  
Thy merits, Thy atoning blood,  
On *this* alone my soul relies.

THEODOSIA,  
A few

\* Phil. iii. 20, 21.



A few days after this she said, "I am now fully convinced my *dissolution* draweth nigh, and, I hope, my *complete redemption*. I have been much revived "with the secret hope of it this day." At another time, "I have had many privileges, but have made a very poor improvement of them, I have been but an unprofitable servant, yet God has preserved me hitherto. I have not been separated from Christ in life; and, I hope, I shall not in death. O, the many sweet hours I have enjoyed in worship! God is faithful." At another time, when she was almost worn out with the fever, and panting for breath, her dearest friend said to her, "Your God does not leave you;" she immediately replies with an emphasis, "No! nor my dear Redeemer!" And again, when he further said to her, "Christ is your all in all," she breaks out,

"Yes, Thou art precious to my soul,

"My treasure and my trust."

At another time, when reminded of that rest which remained for her in heaven, she replies,

"O blessed hour! O bright abode!

"I shall be like, and see my God!"

She frequently spoke of the words of our Lord\*, as having afforded her strong consolation, "*I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish.*"

On the last Lord's day she spent on earth, being told that one of the subjects insisted on that day was, † "*Unless thy law had been my delight, I should then have perished in my affliction;*" she replied, "Yes, I should have sunk into despair:" and again, "God is very good to me:" and to her nearest relation, "O give thanks to God for that great composedness which I enjoy.

\* John x. 28. † Psalms cxix. 92.

"enjoy, and pray for the continuance of it! I hope  
 "I am *not* deceiving myself." And when her friend  
 said to her, "You have not let go your hold on Christ,"  
 She answered with remarkable energy, "No, I find  
 "him to be precious to my soul, and I believe he *will*  
 "not leave me."

The day before her death, she desired to have the  
 260th hymn of the collection read to her, entitled,  
*Christ precious to them that believe*, and was much re-  
 freshed by it. The morning of the day on which she  
 died, she signified to her nearest friend, that it was her  
 desire that he would attend the public worship on that  
 day, and on being told that the subject to be insisted on  
 was, \*"*And for an helmet the hope of salvation*," she in-  
 timated that she found it to be an helmet indeed! And  
 the awful event of that day proved it to be so; for though  
 she found dying work to be "hard work," as she once  
 expressed it in the agonies of death, yet she was carried  
 through it with surprising composure and comfort.

About half an hour before the awful moment came,  
 she turned to her nearest relative who was still sitting by  
 her, and said to him, "O pray for me!" he replied,  
 "I have and do, and Christ prays for you, and prayer  
 "has been heard for you; but I hope, my dear, you  
 "are not uneasy or distressed? Jesus has not left you?"  
 She answered immediately with firmness and joy, "No!"  
 which was the last word she ever spoke. Her breath  
 from this time grew shorter and shorter apace, till at  
 length she placidly fell asleep in Jesus, bearing testimony  
 with her dying lips, to the truth and efficacy of the  
 promise in my text, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace  
 whose mind is stayed on thee.*

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\* 1 Thess. v. 8.



And is it so, my mourning friends? And did she live and die in the full assurance, in the joyful experience of this great truth? Let this then reconcile you to that awful providence with which you have been visited. Can there be a more reviving thought? Can there be a more solid foundation for joy? Receive it then, as "the balm of all your wounds, the cordial of your care." Dry your tears, my friends, and mourn no more. The separation death has made, is indeed painful; but, remember, it is not *final*: in a little time you shall meet again, meet in the realms of *peace*, meet to part no more. Dry your tears then, my Christian friends, and do not mourn and be disconsolate; or if you mourn, let it be only for yourselves, that you are left behind, and that you are not more prepared to enter with her into the joys of your Lord. Again,

Is it so? Have we that foundation of hope, that assurance of peace which my text affords? O then, let us bless God and be thankful for it. How little do we deserve it! How greatly do we need it! By nature and sin we are destitute of this balmy blessing; nay, utter strangers to it; and, what is more, must have been eternally miserable without it: if you have it, my friends, 'tis worth more than the whole world, and you can never never be sufficiently thankful for it!

The blessing is from God; it is the gift of God, the gift of Christ, the purchase of his blood; look to him for it then; in vain do you look for it any where else, in vain do you cry Peace! Peace! if he is not your peace. Nothing but the application of the peace-speaking blood of the Lord Jesus can bring this great blessing into your souls.

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And

And can any of you be contented without it? What!  
be contented to live without God, without Christ,  
without hope, and without peace in your souls? O  
dreadful thought! This is your light, your life, your all!  
And I would not for the whole world, no, let me say it  
again, I would not for the whole world that one soul of  
you should live and die without it!

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*The Hymn referred to page 16.*

JESUS, I love thy charming name,  
'Tis music to my ear;  
Fain would I sound it out so loud,  
That earth and heaven might hear.

Yes, thou art precious to my soul,  
My transport and my trust;  
Jewels to thee are gaudy toys,  
And gold is fordid dust.

All my capacious powers can wish,  
In thee doth richly meet;  
Nor to my eyes is light so dear,  
Nor friendship half so sweet.

Thy grace shall dwell upon my heart,  
And shed it's fragrance there;  
The noblest balm of all it's wounds,  
The cordial of it's care.

I'll speak the honors of thy name,  
With my last laboring breath;  
And dying, clasp thee in my arms,  
The antidote of death.



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T H E

FUNERAL ORATION.

**B**EHOLD, my friends, the ravages that death hath made, and is still making in our sinful, miserable and dying world! Our fathers, where are they,—and the prophets, the wisest and best of men amongst us, do they live forever? No, here they lie;—the hoary head and the infant of days, the bond the free, the rich and poor together,—here they lie undistinguished in the dust of death. All the past generations of men are gone from our world,—they are gone to an awful eternity! And all the men of the present generation are going after as fast as the tide of time can carry them. O death, what art thou doing! Thousands of our fellow mortals fall by thy relentless hand,—they fall by thousands every day, on every side of us! Here the parent and there the child, the infant snatched from the breast of the fond mother: here the husband and there the wife,—all the tender ties of nature, friendship and religion dissolved in the cold arms of death! What painful separation of dearest friends and relations, what awful breaches in mourning families, what heart-rending grief, what complicated sorrow and distress, O cruel death! may we not lay to thy charge!—And wilt thou never relent, shall thy ravages never have an end?—No, never while there is a living soul on earth,

on whom thou mayest wreak thy vengeance!—But stop,—what is death, that we should thus speak? Doth it come by chance, act without commission, or rage without controul?—Far from it:—No, my friends, the stroke of death, when and wherever it comes, is indeed the stroke of God. Death, powerful as it is, can do nothing without him:—God, my friends, is the sole arbiter in life and death.

“ ’Tis HE that lifts our comforts high,  
Or sinks them in the grave.”

Yes, it is God that giveth life to all that live, and sendeth death to all that die.—And do we not all deserve to die? Is it not fit and reasonable that we should die? Yes, it cannot be otherwise; we have all sinned, and the wages of sin is death. The apostacy from the God of our life was early, and it is universal; it began in our first parents, and has been continued in every individual of their posterity to this day. We have all sinned, and therefore we must all die.

But, what is death, that the good man should dread or fear it? To the wicked it is indeed justly terrible!—It puts an end to all their hopes and enjoyments in the present world, and opens to them an alarming prospect of the future. But to the good man, to the real Christian, it is not so. No, to him it is a messenger for good; it puts an end to all his pain anxiety and sorrow: and, for the most part, he meets it with composure.—Yes, “ mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the *end* of that man is peace.”—Nay, more than that, I heard a voice saying unto me, “ Write,” let it be recorded as an unalterable truth, “ *blessed* are the dead  
“ that



“that die in the Lord:”—They are blessed indeed, for they cease from their labors, they enter into rest, their works do follow them, and they are ever, ever with the Lord! Their removal, whether early or late in life, is a loss to us, and to the world which it cannot well bear;—we are lothe, exceeding lothe to part with them;—we wish and pray for their continuance with us;—we cling to their dear remains;—we mourn over their precious dust;—and we mingle our tears over their tombs.—And ought we not to do so? Yes, verily, natural affection, friendship, nay religion itself requires it of us: not to mourn on such occasions, not to mourn indeed over *this* grave, not to water the precious dust we have committed to it, not to mingle our tears with our disconsolate friends that surround it, would argue an insensibility, unworthy of, I was going to say *inconsistent* with the Christian character! Jesus wept over the grave of his friend Lazarus! And shall we not weep over this grave? 'Tis a debt we owe the pious dead, and God forbid that we should withhold it!—She is gone from our world, and the places that once knew her in the family, in the closet and in the house of God, shall know her no more:—but her more than maternal tenderness;—her conjugal affection and piety;—her patience in suffering;—the serenity and composure, the fortitude, the cheerfulness, yea the longing desire with which she received the cold hand of death shall not be forgotten!—She is gone from our world, but we have confidence, we cannot doubt but she is gone to a better world; and therefore, though we mourn over this grave, we do not, we cannot mourn as those without hope. She is gone from our world, she is safely landed on the peaceful shore of eternity! And shall

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we, can we wish for her return?—No, that would be impiety, that would be barbarity indeed!—She is gone to that blessed world where she wished to be, and short of which she could never have been compleatly happy. And in this we ought, and, I hope, we can say we do indeed rejoice.

Think not then, my dear friend and brother, that you have buried all your comfort in this grave!—You have lost your dearest friend and relative, and we know that your loss is great; but great as it is, it bears no proportion to her gain. You have lost the partner of your life and sorrows, with whom perhaps you once fondly hoped that you should have descended the vale of life with equal steps; but God determined otherwise. You see the hand of God, I know you see it, and, though you feel the stroke, you do not entertain one hard thought of God in it.

“ *He gives, and, blessed be his name,  
He takes but what he gave!* ”

The partner of your life and sorrows is gone,—but the dear pledges of that tenderest of all connections she has left behind her,—the olive branches round about your table, these may yet flourish! I pray God that they may flourish, and grow up to be the support and comfort of your declining years! But should these be blasted, and blasted they may be, yet your hope will be in God! Yes, my friend, though the figtree should not blossom, though the fruit of the olive should fail, though the fields should yield no meat and there should be no herd in the stall, though all your outward springs of comfort should be dried up, yet it will be your duty and your privilege



privilege to rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of your salvation. Here, my friend, is solid rock, this is sufficient for your support, cast all your cares and sorrows on it; commit your way to the Lord, trust also in him and he will bring it to pass.

And now, my dear friends, let it be our great concern, not only to acknowledge the hand of God in this providence, but to improve it. Consider the uncertainty, the absolute uncertainty and utter vanity of all worldly enjoyments.—Enter into the true spirit of living, which is the spirit of dying: let us all confess that we are strangers and pilgrims on earth as all our pious fathers were; and let us seek as they did a better country, that is, an heavenly. Bless God, my friends, that you are not left in this world of sin sorrow and death, without hope!—No, there is a blessed hope set before you; life and a blessed immortality are brought to light in the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. And let it be our great concern to enter into the true spirit of the gospel, for this I am confident will be the most powerful means to set us forward in the great work of life, a serious preparation for death, judgment and eternity.—But, perhaps, there may be some here present that never felt, that are utter strangers to the power and grace of the gospel.—What, condemned to death? On the brink of the grave? On the verge of an awful eternity?—And yet strangers, utter strangers to the power and hope and grace of the gospel!—How deplorable your state!—The light shines round about you, but it may be you will not receive it, you love darkness rather than light because your deeds are evil; and you will incur the greater condemnation!—But, my friends, I would hope better things of you, and things that do accompany salvation though I thus speak,

speak.—Nay, I am confident there are some, I trust  
 there are many who hear me to night, that have felt the  
 power, and that now rejoice in the grace of the gospel :  
 Yes, my dear friends, all your hope and all your salva-  
 tion is in it.—You know, and this is the whole gospel,  
 you know that “ God so loved this guilty and miserable  
 “ world of ours, as to send his only begotten Son to  
 “ suffer and die, the just for the unjust, that he might  
 “ bring them nigh to God by the precious blood of his  
 “ cross :” O, amazing grace and love !—Come then, let  
 me intreat you all, guilty and unworthy as you are;  
 come, let us look to Jesus the great captain of our sal-  
 vation, who was made perfect through sufferings. He is  
 able to save, to the very uttermost, all that come to God  
 by Him. Come, trust in this almighty and only Savior,  
 apply to his righteousness and blood, devote yourselves  
 to his service and glory, and then you may be confident  
 that should your bodies die to-morrow, or this very  
 night, your souls shall live for ever.—Yes, and he will  
 change your vile bodies too, and fashion them like to  
 his own most glorious body ; and, in that day, *this*  
*mortal*, which we have now committed to this grave, shall  
 put on *immortality*, and *this corruptible incorruption* !—  
 Thanks be to God then, who giveth us the victory over  
 sin, and death, and hell, through our Lord Jesus Christ !  
 To him be glory for ever and ever, *Amen*.

